

NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting
March 17, 2004

A meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) was held on Wednesday, March 17, 2004, in the City of Grass Valley Council Chambers, 125 East Main Street, California. The meeting was scheduled for 8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Kerry Arnett, Drew Bedwell, Tim Brady, DeVere Mautino, Russ Steele, Josh Susman

Members Absent: Robin Sutherland

Staff Present: Dan Landon, Executive Director; Nancy Holman, Administrative Services Officer; Toni Perry, Administrative Assistant; Mike Woodman, Transportation Planner

Standing Orders: Chairman Arnett convened the Nevada County Transportation Commission meeting at 8:35 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: For discussion and possible action.

1. Financial Reports: February 2004

Executive Director Landon reviewed the financial reports and provided an explanation of the use of the funds.

2. Correspondence:

Executive Director Landon highlighted Item F, notification from the Nevada County Board of Supervisors of the appointments of Mr. Tim Brady and Mr. Russ Steele as members of the Nevada County Transportation Commission.

3. Executive Director's Report:

3.1 Status Report on U.C. Berkeley Institute of Transportation Studies Safety Evaluation Team

Executive Director Landon stated that approximately a month ago two members from the U.C. Berkeley Institute of Transportation Studies performed an evaluation on four intersections: SR 49/La Barr Meadows Road; South Auburn/Colfax Avenue, Idaho-Maryland/Brunswick Road; SR 174/Brunswick Road. A draft report will be submitted by March 31st for review by staff from NCTC, Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Nevada County.

3.2 Designation of Western Nevada County as a Non-Attainment Area Under U.S. EPA 8-Hour Ozone Standards

Executive Director Landon provided background information regarding what had occurred since December 2003 when the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) indicated their determination to include western Nevada County and four other mountain counties with the Sacramento and/or San Joaquin non-attainment areas under the new federal 8-hour ozone standards.

On February 24th representatives from various agencies met with EPA staff members to explain the mountain counties position. EPA staff provided the following reasons for their position: 1) EPA has a national policy they are implementing and the more exceptions they make to that policy the more difficult it is to implement in other places; and 2) if the metropolitan areas should come into attainment under the standards prior to the mountain counties coming into attainment, EPA would have no enforceable mechanism to continue to require improvements in the air quality in the metropolitan areas. A staff member from the Air Resources Board (ARB) responded that California does have a mechanism in place whereby upwind areas are required to continue to improve their air quality until downwind areas come into attainment. ARB staff suggested that if an enforceable policy could be put in place for EPA, there should be no reason why mountain counties could not be designated separately. The EPA Region IX staff agreed in principle with this suggestion.

Since February's meeting, Cynthia Marvin of the ARB and Matt Haber of EPA Region IX have been working together on developing a letter that would include a solution to EPA's concerns. Sharon Reinders of US EPA's Air Quality office in North Carolina, stated to Mr. Landon, that if EPA Region IX provided a favorable recommendation, her office would be able to give positive consideration of the request. A copy of the letter from the ARB to EPA should be received at the end of March. Staff will stay in contact with congressional representatives in case additional leverage is needed.

3.3 Status Report on Idaho-Maryland Road/East Main Street Intersection Project

Executive Director Landon reviewed the project development process to date. He noted that in December Caltrans had expressed a concern with the impact of additional traffic going onto the Golden Center Freeway from the Idaho-Maryland/East Main Street intersection. In response to those concerns, Grant Johnson of PRISM Engineering videotaped and analyzed the intersection and the adjacent segment of the Golden Center Freeway, to determine what impact the additional traffic would create. The analysis showed that even without additional traffic from the Idaho-Maryland/East Main Street intersection, traffic operations on that segment of the Golden Center Freeway would become problematic within approximately three years. In recognition of the fact that Caltrans would be reluctant to approve improvements that would add traffic to that freeway segment, staff began to work on an alternative to address the operational issues between the Idaho-Maryland/East Main Street onramp and the Bennett Street offramp. The alternative that was developed proposes to install a median barrier on this segment of the freeway so that traffic coming from the Idaho-Maryland/East Main Street intersection will be diverted to the Bennett Street offramp. The cross section of the offramp will be widened so that traffic will be able to exit from the freeway to the Bennett Street offramp. Mr. Landon used overheads to review traffic volumes and proposed improvements that were included at Bennett Street and along the frontage road to the South Auburn/Neal Street/Colfax Avenue intersection. He stated that the Grass Valley City Council approved the project concept and supported preparation of the necessary reports and plans to construct the improvements. Greg Bickett of Bickett Engineering has developed a preliminary cost estimate of approximately \$4.4 million dollars for this improvement, which includes nine intersections and two freeway ramps.

Mr. Landon reviewed a "sample" financial plan to show the feasibility of this expanded project. Bickett Engineering is preparing a scope of work for completion of the project development and design work for this improvement, which will be presented at the Commission's April 21st meeting. The goal of the project team is to be ready to begin construction in approximately eighteen months. Mr. Landon stated that the Project Development Team will work with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to develop a funding plan that will be brought to the Commission.

4.A. Project Status Report: Tom Brannon, Caltrans Project Manager for Nevada County.

Mr. Brannon introduced his new boss, Brenda Schimpf, the new Chief of Project Management at Caltrans District 3. He also stated that due to the loss of five project managers, he has been given responsibility for projects in Glenn County, in addition to Sierra and Nevada Counties. Mr. Brannon reviewed Project Nomination Sheets and Funding Plans developed for the Dorsey Drive interchange and the SR 49 widening project. These two projects are included in the 2003 Nevada County Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). He then reviewed the status of the following Caltrans projects in Nevada County:

➤ Truckee Signals and Roundabouts at SR 80/89 Interchange

Mr. Brannon stated the Concept Approval for the roundabouts is signed and the Project Report is circulating for Caltrans approval. The financial contribution agreement is on the CTC's April agenda for the state's share of \$750,000 to go into this project.

➤ Roundabout at SR 20 East Bound Ramps and Gold Flat Road Intersection

Mr. Brannon stated that this project was being funded with safety funds and was designed for the northbound side of the interchange where traffic accidents occur. He explained that Caltrans safety program (SHOPP) looks at the number of accidents that occur at a location and what kind of project can reduce the problem. Chairman Arnett thanked Caltrans for the public workshop for this project. Mr. Landon noted that a majority of Nevada City Council members had requested Caltrans to consider using stop signs as an interim solution that could potentially save money and be less disruptive to the community. Mr. Brannon stated that Caltrans would analyze the use of stop sign control at this location to determine if it will provide the necessary improvements to traffic operations.

4.B. SR 49 at La Barr Meadows Road Update: Ann Marie Robinson, Caltrans District 3 Liaison

Ann Marie Robinson discussed her efforts related to safety issues in the vicinity of the La Barr Meadows Road intersection and provided the following information:

- o There will be additional 55 mph speed limit signs posted in the area.
- o She has developed a fact sheet that answers some of the frequently asked questions about safety issues.
- o Her goal is to educate seniors about alternative travel options and to educate them how to avoid making left hand turns in that area.
- o There has been increased CHP enforcement in the area. The CHP is considering providing quarterly mature citizen driving classes throughout the county.
- o She wants to encourage drivers in the Forrest Springs Mobile Home Park to drive Highway 49, rather than making two left hand turns onto and off of SR 49 when they return home via the La Barr Meadows Road.
- o A Highway 49 safety clinic workshop, developed specifically for the Mountain Air Mobile Park, is scheduled for March 23rd with representatives from the CHP, transit services, NCTC, and Caltrans.

CONSENT ITEMS:

5. Certificates of Appreciation for Service on the NCTC: Ann Guerra, Chet Krage.
Authorized Chairman to sign.
6. NCTC Minutes: February 18, 2004. *Approved.*

7. 2004/05 FY State Transit Assistance Apportionments: *Adopted the updated apportionment table as a basis for allocation from the State Transit Assistance Fund for 2004/05 FY.*

Commissioner Susman made a motion to approve the consent items and abstained from the minutes. Commissioner Brady seconded the motion. Commissioner Steele abstained from the minutes. The motion passed with two abstentions.

Chairman Arnett presented certificates of appreciation to out-going Commission members Ann Guerra and Chet Krage and presented a certificate of appreciation to Commissioner Susman for his role as Chairman during 2003.

Chairman Arnett and fellow Commissioners welcomed the newly appointed Commissioners, Tim Brady and Russ Steele.

ACTION ITEMS:

8. Election of Officer: Select Vice Chairman for 2004.

Commissioner Bedwell nominated Commissioner Mautino. Commissioner Susman seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Public Hearing: 2003 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP):

Executive Director Landon explained that the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) was a five-year listing of projects, and every two years projects are added to the five-year list. Due to state budget constraints, there are no new revenues identified for the 2004 STIP and funding for the current projects must be spread over the additional two years. Mr. Landon also noted that the state has set aside a portion of federal funds for Transportation Enhancement activities, and the 2003 Nevada County RTIP includes a reserve of \$1.1 million dollars of those funds. Mr. Landon explained that in order to maximize funding for construction, NCTC staff does not propose to use any STIP funds for Programming, Planning, and Monitoring activities during the next two years. Mr. Landon then reviewed Resolution 04-08, which adopts the 2003 Nevada County RTIP.

Chairman Arnett opened a public hearing at 9:45 a.m.

Mr. Chet Krage expressed his concern whether the Commission should be using Transportation Enhancement money as opposed to dealing with safety and congestion issues. He stated that when he was on the Commission, approximately one million dollars of TEA funds were allocated to five projects. Only two of the five have been completed, which in his opinion demonstrated that the money was not spent quickly. Mr. Landon responded that Transportation Enhancement monies are separate from operational funds. They are 10% of the federal apportionment from the Surface Transportation Program and must be used, per federal law, for transportation enhancements.

There were no further comments from the public. Chairman Arnett closed the public hearing at 9:47 a.m.

Commissioner Mautino stated she appreciated Mr. Krage's comments, noting it would behoove the Commission to look at possible ways to use the enhancement funds toward solving some of the

many safety problems in the community. Mr. Landon responded that there may be some opportunity to use the Transportation Enhancement funds for pedestrian safety issues.

Following discussion, Commissioner Bedwell made a motion to adopt Resolution 04-08. Commissioner Steel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Amendment II to the 2003/04 Overall Work Program.

Executive Director Landon reviewed the adjustments to the work program summarized in the memorandum to the Commission.

Commissioner Steele noted that under W.E. 3.2 there was no bullet to denote the Weaver Auto Traffic Impact Study. Mr. Landon responded he would add this information to the work element.

Commissioner Mautino made a motion to adopt Resolution 04-09 with the corrected amount of \$441,785 for the Crestview Project Report, and the addition of the Weaver Auto Traffic Impact Study into W.E. 3.2. Commissioner Bedwell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Commissioner Bedwell reported that he attended the meeting with Dan Landon and Gretchen Bennitt at the RCRC. He stated that it was very gratifying to hear encouraging words from the "feds" in regard to the air quality non-attainment issue.

Commissioner Steele stated he had previously been on the Commission and looked forward to being back on it and working with staff again in solving some of the problems.

Commissioner Mautino stated that the Grass Valley City Council appreciated Dan Landon's presentation addressing the issues occurring at the Idaho-Maryland/East Main Road intersection.

Commissioner Brady stated as a new Commissioner he wanted to thank Chet Krage and Ann Guerra for their work.

Commissioner Bedwell stated that the County is working with Kilroy's Towing Service to try to beautify that portion of Highway 49 where there business is located. A sign has been designed and its location has been agreed upon with participation from the City of Grass Valley, the Rotary, the Kiwanis, and the Grass Valley Downtown Association. With the addition of trees and flowers being planted, only about one third of the business will be seen from the highway as compared to what is seen today.

Commissioner Arnett noted that the appointment of a representative on the Gateway Monument Committee needed to be agendized for the next meeting.

SCHEDULE FOR NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, April 21, 2004 at 8:30 a.m., at the Nevada City Council Chambers.
ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Chairman Arnett adjourned the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: _____
Nancy D. Holman, Administrative Services Officer

Approved on: _____

By: _____
Chairman
Nevada County Transportation Commission